

Lightweight 155mm Howitzer (LWI55)

DESCRIPTION

The LW155 is the world's first 155mm towed howitzer with a "fly-weight" of less than 9,800 pounds. It has digital fire control, and offers greater ground mobility and improved reaction times compared with the M198 howitzer it is designed to replace.



OPERATIONAL IMPACT

The LW155 towed howitzer system (defined as howitzer, prime mover, and associated equipment) will meet the increased operational thresholds in lethality, survivability, mobility, deployability, and sustainability

required to support maneuver warfare. The system's operational tempo will be enhanced, ensuring that greater firepower is achieved while the system's vulnerability is reduced. The system will provide the supported force with overmatching fire support, a weapon system that shoots more, moves more, is more agile, responsive, reliable, and lighter than its predecessor.

PROGRAM STATUS

The program entered low-rate initial production in early FY 2003. Ninety-four systems will be produced over the next two years with a full-rate production decision currently scheduled for November 2004. In parallel, the detailed design of the Army-funded digital fire control system (DFCS) has been completed successfully and is currently under test. The DFCS will be retrofitted onto all USMC howitzers that were initially fielded with glass and iron sights and will support joint procurement with the Army for the balance of production in FY 2005-2007.

PROCUREMENT PROFILE

Quantity:

FY03

34

FY04

60

DEVELOPER/MANUFACTURER

Prime Contractor: BAE Systems, Barrow in Furness, UK

Sub-Contractors: General Dynamics, ATP, Burlington, VT
Wegmann, USA, Lynchburg, VA
Hydro-Mill, Chatsworth, CA